

SGO Project News Release

## Mistika's Stunning Colour Grading Tools Helped Create Spectacular Filmic Look in *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* at Park Road Post Production

Mistika's Award-Winning Grading and Workflow Technology plays a Crucial Role at Park Road Post Production in *The Hobbit* Trilogy

*"The Mistika is simply a great asset creatively and technically, and is at the core of our work on this incredible production."*

**Trish Cahill**, Supervising Digital Colourist for *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* at Park Road Post Production

Wellington, New Zealand, 13 January 2014 – SGO's award-winning **Mistika DI Colour Grading post systems** form the core at Park Road Post Production and were utilised again in epic fantasy film *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*, a production of New Line Cinema and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures (MGM), the second film in *The Hobbit* Trilogy directed by Peter Jackson.

Mistika's involvement at Park Road included supporting on-set services and screening HFR digital dailies, all the way through to the DI online, stereoscopic work and stunning final grade for the film. The world-class facility boasts impressive purpose-built state-of-the-art DI theatres for both high-end 2D and stereoscopic finishing work, supported by Mistika 4K/Stereoscopic master systems combined with dedicated finishing suites with matching SGO technology and shared storage for speed and fluidity between their online editors and colourists.

**Supervising Digital Colourist for *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* Trish Cahill** worked with a team at Park Road alongside **Lead DI Colourist Vickie-Lynn Roy**, using **Mistika's world-leading colour grading toolsets** to complement the second film's darker and richer narrative as the company head through Middle-earth toward both Erebor and, of course, Smaug – the extraordinary creature brought to life by Benedict Cumberbatch and the VFX geniuses of Weta Digital.

"At Park Road we are inspired by filmmakers who share our constant desire to push storytelling tools forward. That motivation allows us to deliver world-leading results for our clients which never let technology take the lead, but which give us compelling colour grading tools with which to achieve a director's vision. **The Mistika is simply a great asset creatively and technically, and is at the core of our work on this incredible production.**"

Trish further explains the DI process using Mistika and how she put her creativity to work behind the head-spinning action scenes and help enhance the picture-book beauty in *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*.

“Park Road choose tools which are not only scalable and technically deep, but have truly focussed on using those tools as enablers for creative expression. With the Mistika we were able to work interactively with the production, at High Frame Rate, taking the unique looks developed for the second film and extending them in the final grade sessions to focus on visual narrative. The best thing about great tools is they enable us to work with filmmakers to bring the world they imagined to life.”

**Vickie-Lynn** expands explaining some of the technical intricacies behind the scenes, “Beyond the look development undertaken prior to the final online sessions, such as the variable ‘lens’ effects built entirely in the Mistika, we were able to effortlessly fold in highly technical requirements for specific shots – such as deep mattes, themselves mathematically driving complex grade and stereo effects – all on the same platform, and all the time running critical stereo work in parallel with the ongoing look refinement, as the team headed towards the final delivery.”

**Lead Stereographer Meetal Gokul** explains “The interaction of grade and stereo is so often underestimated, so at Park Road we work in parallel – with any screening format, 2D or 3D, available for review at any time. The stereo toolset in the Mistika was definitely used to its fullest for the second film in the Trilogy, and as always my team's focus is on an incredible 3D experience which drives the story forward. This film is amazing, and the Mistika continues to provide exactly the right platform to service productions of any scale.”

**Head of Technology at Park Road Phil Oatley** confirms “We rely on the capability of SGO's Mistika when creating stunning content for all our clients. Once again, on a ground-breaking production of this magnitude, Mistika has provided a proven and reliable architecture that was both flexible and robust, giving us the immense speed we required. It is a huge advantage to work on one unified platform, and the Mistika combines immense power with remarkable versatility.”

It took Park Road Post Production, together with SGO, years of research, development, testing and refinement to create the unique workflow for *The Hobbit* Trilogy. *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* realised a new technical and aesthetic standard. **Workflow Architect Anthony Pratt** played a pivotal role in developing Park Road Digital Cinema, VFX and 3D workflows and is part of the lead team that designed the world's first HFR-3D workflow. “The pipeline we have built around SGO's tools is seamless both for the client and for our team. The core of our entire pipeline was enabled by the dedication, support and innovation of the team at SGO, and use of the Mistika as our primary platform. We were delighted to put it to work again on *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*.” Tony adds, “Mistika has not only energised our team, and replaced the previous ‘heavy-iron’ infrastructure at Park Road, but is the absolute heart of servicing large-scale productions and with timeliness previously impossible to achieve.”

**Park Road, with technology partner SGO**, also won the industry's prestigious **IBC2013 Innovation Awards** for their pioneering work building the **World's First HFR-3D post workflow**. The 2013 IBC International Honour for Excellence was also presented to Sir Peter Jackson. In addition, SGO received the coveted **International 3D Society's 3D Technology Lumière Award** for its Mistika finishing and colour grading system and for advancements in Stereo 3D and Ultra HD technology, a highly complimentary recognition alongside Park Road's receipt of a Lumière Award recognizing their HFR Pipeline.

**SGO's Director of Global Sales and Operations Geoff Mills** affirms "We are very proud that Mistika continues to play an integral role at companies of such a high calibre such as Park Road, in yet another exceptional feature film delivery as part of *The Hobbit* Trilogy. The team at Park Road Post continue to stretch the boundaries of film production and SGO eagerly supports them with current and future project work."

**CEO of SGO Miguel Angel Doncel** asserts "Park Road's highly creative and brilliant technical teams rely on advanced technology that grows with them. The loyal relationship that exists between our two companies, and which we cherish, has grown stronger than ever, and is a significant testament to our shared commitment to quality and innovation to remain on the very edge of new filmmaking technologies now and in the future."

The second film in *The Hobbit* Trilogy follows the Hobbit Bilbo Baggins (Martin Freeman), the Wizard Gandalf (Ian McKellen) and 13 Dwarves, led by Thorin Oakenshield (Richard Armitage), as they continue their journey to reclaim the Dwarf Kingdom of Erebor. Along the way they encounter the skin-changer Beorn, giant Spiders of Mirkwood, Wood-elves led by Legolas (Orlando Bloom), Tauriel (Evangeline Lilly), and King Thranduil (Lee Pace), and a mysterious Man named Bard (Luke Evans), who smuggles them into Lake-town. Finally reaching the Lonely Mountain, they face their greatest danger - the Dragon Smaug (Benedict Cumberbatch).

*The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* topped the worldwide box office, crossing the \$500 million mark in its first two weeks of release. The film began releasing in markets as of 11 December 2013, and is currently showing in cinemas in HFR 3D, IMAX 3D and 2D. Visit the official movie website at [www.thehobbit.net/](http://www.thehobbit.net/)

#### **Stills Credits:**

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For image captions studio uses:© New Line Cinema's and MGM's fantasy adventure "THE HOBBIT: THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG," a Warner Bros. Pictures release.

### ABOUT PARK ROAD POST PRODUCTION

A premier post production facility located in Wellington, New Zealand. Developed by filmmakers for filmmakers, Park Road offers a relaxing and inspiring environment for filmmakers to realise their vision. Park Road was established as a one-stop shop with world-class integrated picture and sound departments all under one roof. Park Road is uniquely placed to supply all post services for a feature from on-set support, rushes, stereoscopic alignment, digital intermediate, Foley and sound mixing through to the final completion of all film and digital deliverables for distribution. Visit them at: [www.parkroad.co.nz](http://www.parkroad.co.nz)

### ABOUT THE HOBBIT: THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG

From Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Peter Jackson comes *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*, the second in a trilogy of films adapting the enduringly popular masterpiece *The Hobbit*, by J.R.R. Tolkien. The screenplay for *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* is by Fran Walsh & Philippa Boyens & Peter Jackson & Guillermo del Toro based on the novel by J.R.R. Tolkien. Jackson also produced the film, together with Carolynne Cunningham, Zane Weiner and Fran Walsh. The executive producers are Alan Horn, Toby Emmerich, Ken Kamins and Carolyn Blackwood, with Philippa Boyens and Eileen Moran serving as co-producers.

*"The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug"* is a production of New Line Cinema and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures (MGM), with New Line managing production. Warner Bros. Pictures is handling worldwide theatrical distribution, with select international territories as well as all international television distribution being handled by MGM. [www.thehobbit.net](http://www.thehobbit.net)

### ABOUT MISTIKA

As the cornerstone of many internationally acclaimed facilities and broadcasters, Mistika provides creative tools for 2D and highly-developed stereoscopic 3D productions, boasting remarkable speed and real-time visual effects, colour grading, editing, compositing, graphics and multi-format mastering and much more. With Mistika operating from non-proprietary hardware with an open file structure, including widespread codec-support, it enables easy integration and compatibility with other systems. Mistika uses NVIDIA's Quadro GPUs to accelerate algorithmic computations involved in all visual effects, pushing the boundaries of science. SGO entrusts Mistika to HP's platforms in order to achieve maximum real-time editing, ultimate grading and compositing. HP Workstations are time-tested and dependable and exclusively used to accelerate 2D and Stereo 3D post production workflows in all Mistika projects. Find out more about Mistika at [www.sgo.es](http://www.sgo.es)

### ABOUT SGO

An established European developer of leading high-end solutions including its flagship DI, Colour Grading and Stereo 3D finishing system Mistika for the post production and broadcast industries, supported by specialist technology partners such as HP and NVIDIA. A global company, SGO continues to expand with offices and reseller partners across the world. SGO has been involved in landmark projects which include the launch of the first 3D TV Channel in Europe by BSkyB; exciting Stereo 3D epics with creative clients such as Park Road Post Production, Molinare, Bad Robot, ONSIGHT, The Look, BTV Post, Digimage and The Farm, to mention a few. Mistika was also used in many 2D and Stereo 3D projects which include the world's first High Frame Rate feature film *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Star Trek Into Darkness*, *Mr Stink* - the BBC's first scripted Stereo 3D drama, *Galapagos 3D*, *Storm Surfers 3D*, BAFTA award-winning *Flying Monsters 3D with David Attenborough* for Sky 3D TV, *Stalingrad* and many others. Visit them at [www.sgo.es](http://www.sgo.es)

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